BOROUGH OF TOTNES.

ANNUAL REPORT

OF THE

MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH,

FOR THE YEAR 1908.

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GENTLEMEN,

I beg to hand you my Annual Report for the year 1908.

Population.—The population of the Borough is still estimated to be 4,034, the number obtained in the last Census in 1900, as there appears to be no good ground for alteration.

The average estimated population for the preceding ten years, 1898 to 1907 (both inclusive) is 4,075.

Births.—The number of births registered in the Borough during the preceding ten years has been 843, equal to an average of 84·3 per annum, and a birth-rate of 20·68 per thousand, calculated upon the average population of 4,075.

The number of births in 1908 was 94 (the same number as in 1898, and the largest number since that year), equal to a birth-rate of 23·3 per thousand, of these 42 were boys and 52 girls. The birth-rate for England and Wales during 1908 was 26·5 per thousand, and that for 142 smaller towns of England and Wales was 26· per thousand. The birth-rate for the Borough is thus, as usual, below that of the country generally.

Deaths.—The number of deaths in the Borough during the preceding ten years was 651, an average of 65·1 per annum, equal to a mortality of 15 97 per thousand per annum.

The total number of deaths registered in the District in 1908 was 100, of these 28 occurred in the Workhouse and 5 in the Cottage Hospital, and the remaining 67 in the Borough. Five of those who died in the Workhouse were residents of Totnes, and must be added to the 67, making the corrected total 72, equal to a mortality of 17·85 per thousand.

The death-rate of England and Wales during 1908 was 14·7 per thousand living, and for 142 smaller towns the same, 14·7. The death-rate in the Borough during 1908 thus exceeded that of the average for the preceding ten years, and is considerably greater than that of the country generally.

The remaining 23 deaths in the Workhouse and the five in the Cottage Hospital were of non-residents of Totnes. They were as follows:—

Paignton	4
Dartmouth	3
Brixham	6
Harberton	3
South Brent	2
Dartington	2
Ugborough	1
Cornworthy	1
Marldon	1
Ashprington	1
Staverton	1
Stoke Gabriel	1
Bristol	1
Torquay	1
	28

Zymotic Mortality.—There were three deaths under this heading, viz., two from whooping cough and one from membranous croup, equal to a mortality of ·74 per thousand.

The following table gives the mortality for the preceding ten years from epidemic diseases:—

	1898	'99	1900	'01	'02	'03	'04	'05	'06	'07	
Measles	1	0	0	3	0	0	1	2	0	0	7
Whooping Cough	5	1	0	0	0	1	6	0	0	0	13
Enteric Fever ..	0	1	0	0	1	2	1	0	0	0	5
Simple Continued Fever.....	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Scarlet Fever ..	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1
Influenza	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	0	0	3
Totals ..	6	2	1	3	1	3	8	6	0	0	30

Measles	7
Whooping Cough.....	13
Enteric Fever.....	5
Simple Continued Fever ..	1
Scarlet Fever	1
Influenza	3
Total..	30

Equal to an average of 3 per annum, or ·735 per thousand per annum, calculated upon the average population for the ten years.

The death-rate for England and Wales from the seven principal epidemic diseases was 1·29 per thousand in 1908. In this respect the Borough, as usual, shows a better return than that of the country generally.

Phthisis (Pulmonary Tuberculosis).—The number of deaths from this cause in 1908 was 7, equal to a mortality of 1·73, about one-tenth of the total rate. The average age was 27·6 years.

Cancer.—There were 3 deaths from Cancer. The average age was 76.

There was no death from accident or suicide.

Infant Mortality.—During the preceding ten years there have been 83 deaths of infants under one year of age out of 843 born during the same period, equal to a mortality of 98 58 per thousand births.

Nine deaths under one year of age were registered in 1908 to 94 births registered during the same period, the infant mortality was therefore 95 7 per thousand births. The death-rate of infants under one year in England and Wales during 1908 was 121 to 1,000 births.

Ages.—34 out of the total 72 deaths were of persons over 65 years of age.

Cases Notified.—Six cases of infectious disease were notified during the year, viz., four of diphtheria and two of the disease known as scarlatina or scarlet fever.

Drainage.—The pumping has worked satisfactorily.

Water.—The supply during the year has been satisfactory in quality and quantity. The Broomborough supply has been kept under observation throughout the year on account of its pollution from an adjacent farm in 1902. The Follaton supply has been added for the six summer months. A considerable number of house drains have been inspected and tested during the year, and sanitary defects remedied. The butchers' shops and slaughter houses have been inspected and found in good sanitary condition, also the dairies and cow-sheds; and the bye-laws for keeping them in a sanitary condition are being enforced.

In accordance with the Factory and Workshops Act, lists of workers have been kept and various inspections made.

The rainfall in 1908 was 35·36 inches.

	Total for the Month.	Greatest fall in 24 hours. Depth.	Date.	Rainy Days.	
Jan.	2·54	0·71	16	13	
Feb.	2·22	0·93	16	12	
March	4·28	1·05	15	16	
April	3·19	0·72	27	15	
May	2·45	0·56	14	10	
June	0·72	0·47	1	4	15 days' drought.
July	2·28	0·69	16	11	14 days' drought.
Aug.	5·19	1·12	31	12	18 days' drought.
Sept.	2·45	0·50	19	17	
Oct.	2·55	0·55	15	17	
Nov.	1·41	0·26	11	11	
Dec.	6·08	0·85	17	25	

The rainfall was 9·09 inches less than in 1907.

I am, Gentlemen,

Your obedient Servant,

KENNETH R. SMITH, M.D., B.S. Lond., D.P.H., Lond.